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SUBJECT: WEINSTEIN WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE ON BURUNDI

1. ARTICLE ENTITLED "BURUNDI, A MODEL FOR SOUTH AFRICA"
APPEARED ON OPED PAGE OF MAY 8 WASHINGTON POST. AUTHOR IS
WARREN WEINSTEIN, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL
SCIENCE AT THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT OSWENGO AND
BOARD MEMBER OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INTERNET.

2. TEXT OF ARTICLE FOLLOWS QUOTE IN THEIR DEBATE OVER WHERE
TO GO, SOUTH AFRICANS HAVE FREQUENTLY POINTED TO INDEPENDENT
BLACK AFRICAN STATES, ARGUING THAT CONDITIONS ARE WORSE
THERE THAN IN SOUTH AFRICA ITSELF.

A PET CASE IS BURUNDI, WHOSE RECENT HISTORY STRIKES MANY
SIMILARITIES WITH SOUTH AFRICA. IN BURUNDI, APARTHEID-LIKE
PRACTICES OF THE RULING TUTSI MINORITY ETHNIC GROUP HAVE
DENIED EQUAL SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ACCESS TO THE
COUNTRY'S MAJORITY HUTU ETHNICS AND ANOTHER MINORITY GROUP,
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THE TWA. IN A SITUATION PARALLEL TO THAT OF SOUTH AFRICA,
THE TUTSI AND HUTU HARBOR DISTRUST ABOUT EACH OTHER'S
ULTIMATE DESIGNS. THE STAKES INVOLVE THE POSSIBLE PHYSICAL
EXCLUSION OF ONE OF THE GROUPS, AND A SOLUTION THAT INTE-
GRATES HUTU COMPLETELY INTO BURUNDI'S SYSTEM RISKS
SWAMPING TUTSI, WHO ARE OUTNUMBERED 4 TO 1.

I RECENTLY RETURNED FROM BURUNDI AND I HAVE BEEN ONE OF ITS STRONGEST CRITICS PRECISELY BECAUSE OF THE APARTHEID-LIKE PRACTICES THAT HAVE EXISTED THERE. HOWEVER, IN NOVEMBER 1976 BURUNDI GOT A NEW HEAD OF STATE IN A BLOODLESS COUP D'ETAT. HE IS A TUTSI, A YOUNG MILITARY OFFICER NAMED JEAN-BAPTISTE BAGAZA.

SINCE TAKING POWER, BAGAZA HAS COURAGEOUSLY WORKED AT CONFRONTING ETHNIC TENSIONS AND INEQUALITIES: HE HAS PROMULGATED LAND REFORMS AIMED AT HELPING THE MAJORITY HUTU OBTAIN MORE LANDS AND TO REDUCE EXPLOITATION OF HUTU BY ABSENTEE TUTSI LANDLORDS. HE HAS TOURED THE COUNTRY-SIDE TO PREACH RECONCILIATION AND ORDERED GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS TO FACILITATE THE RETURN OF HUTU REFUGEES (THEY NUMBER AT LEAST 150,000, MOST HAVING FLED AFTER AS MANY AS A QUARTER MILLION OF THEIR BRETHREN WERE SLAUGHTERED) -- AND HUTU ARE COMING BACK. AND HE HAS BEGUN TO ATTACK THE ECONOMIC DISPARITIES THAT RESULTED FROM YEARS OF TUTSI PRIVILEGE AND HUTU DEPRIVATION.

IN BURUNDI, I DISCUSSED HUMAN RIGHTS WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, IN PARTICULAR AT THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY. THEY, TOO, RECOGNIZE THE RISKS INVOLVED IN WORKING TO UNDO YEARS OF WRONGS AGAINST HUTU, BUT ALSO IN TRYING TO GET HUTU TO ACCEPT TUTSI CLAIMS TO A RIGHT TO EXIT AS BURUNDIANS AND TO AVOID PHYSICAL ANNIHILATION IF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HUTU MAJORITY RULE BECOMES A FACT OF LIFE.

SOUTH AFRICA'S LEADERS MIGHT PROFIT BY A CLOSER LOOK AT WHAT BURUNDI'S NEW LEADER IS TRYING TO ACHIEVE. FOR EXAMPLE, HE HAS DESEGREGATED THE (TACITLY) SEGREGATED SCHOOL SYSTEM, THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY, ALLOWING HUTU AND TUTSI FUTURE ELITES TO MINGLE AND INTERACT, PERHAPS IN THE HOPE OF PREPARING THEM TO LIVE TOGETHER BEYOND THE CURRENT DEBATES ON BURUNDI'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL FUTURE. (THE NUMBER OF HUTU STUDENTS REMAINS INADEQUATE, BUT THE COUNTRY IS ONLY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE RECONCILIATION PROCESS). SOUTH AFRICA'S LEADERSHIP COULD, AS BAGAZA HAS HAD THE COURAGE TO DO, UNDERTAKE TO SPEAK OUT FORTHRIGHTLY ABOUT SOCIAL REFORMS -- AND THAT HAS OCCURRED IN BURUNDI DESPITE STRONG RESISTANCE BY MANY TUTSI. SOUTH AFRICA MIGHT ALSO TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT BAGAZA'S ATTEMPT TO CONSISTENTLY ESPOUSE AN ENLIGHTENED RHETORIC, WHILE CONTINUOUSLY WORKING AT IMPLEMENTATION -- WITH ALL AWARE THAT THE ROAD AHEAD IS BUMPY.

CLEARLY, ONE DOES NOT KNOW WHETHER BURUNDI'S NEW LEADER

WILL SUCCEED, BUT IT IS INTERESTING THAT THE "GIVENS"
WITH WHICH HE MUST WORK PLACE BURUNDI'S LEADERSHIP AT A
CLEAR AND NET DISADVANTAGE VIS-A-VIS THOSE WITH WHICH
SOUTH AFRICAN LEADERS CAN OPERATE. BURUNDI IS POVERTY
STRICKEN AND LANDLOCKED; IT HAS LIMITED NATURAL RESOURCES,
IS OVERCROWDED WITH A RATHER SMALL LAND MASS AND A
CRITICAL SHORTAGE OF USABLE LAND. SOUTH AFRICA SUFFERS
FROM NONE OF THAT; INDEED, SOUTH AFRICA STILL HAS AN
ECONOMIC FRONTIER. A UNITED SOUTH AFRICA COULD HAVE
IMMEASURABLE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL FOR GROWTH, IT WOULD BE
IN AN EXCELLENT POSITION TO TAP MARKETS THROUGHOUT THE
THIRD WORLD, AND IN AFRICA IN PARTICULAR. A UNITED
SOUTH AFRICA WOULD ATTRACT MORE INVESTMENT, AND COULD
BEGIN TO PLAY THE CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE SOUTH AFRICA SHOULD
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BE PLAYING BOTH IN TERMS OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND
DEVELOPMENT HELP TO OTHER PARTS OF THE THIRD WORLD.

PERHAPS SOUTH AFRICA'S LEADERS SHOULD REAPPRAISE THE
COST OF COURAGE ESPECIALLY WHEN TINY BURUNDI'S LEADER
CAN TAKE A GIANT STEP. IF BURUNDI'S TUTSI, FACED WITH
HOSTILE REFUGEES ON ALL OF ITS BORDERS, CAN TAKE THE
PLUNGE, WHAT EXCUSE DOES SOUTH AFRICA HAVE NOT TO FOLLOW
SUIT? UNQUOTE.

3. BURUNDI AMBASSADOR NZEYIMANA TELEPHONED AF/C
AFTERNOON OF MAY 8 TO REGISTER PROTEST CONCERNING ARTICLE.
HIS MAIN COMPLAINT SEEMED TO BE THAT BURUNDI IS
DISCUSSED IN SAME ARTICLE THAT DISCUSSES SOUTH AFRICA.
WHILE POINTING OUT THAT WEINSTEIN IS PRIVATE CITIZEN
AF/C OFFICER TOLD NZEYIMANA THAT IN HIS VIEW ARTICLE
PORTRAYS BURUNDI IN ESSENTIALLY FAVORABLE LIGHT. VANCE

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